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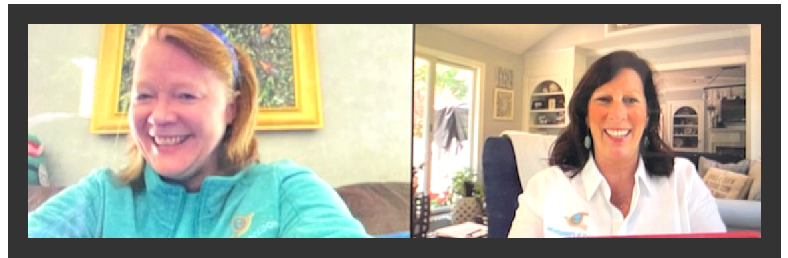
EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

JUNE 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Written by Tricia Russell



Historically, June is a big month for Fear 2 Freedom and this 10th anniversary year it is the biggest ever! June signifies the end of our fiscal year, the end of another school year and the time to plan and create for next fiscal year. So why is this June different? I am retiring as Executive Director, and our new Chief Executive Officer will begin at the start of our new fiscal year, July 1st.

This is bittersweet for me as Fear 2 Freedom has been a labor of love. My position here and dedication to this work has always been making an impact in people's lives. I will remain a part of Fear 2 Freedom as a Board member, Champion, volunteer, and supporter.

I am thrilled to introduce you to our new CEO, Virginia Woodward! Virginia comes to us with years of professional non-profit experience and a passion for our mission to empower students and support survivors. Thank you for all your support over the years, and I hope you will join me in welcoming Virginia to our Fear 2 Freedom!

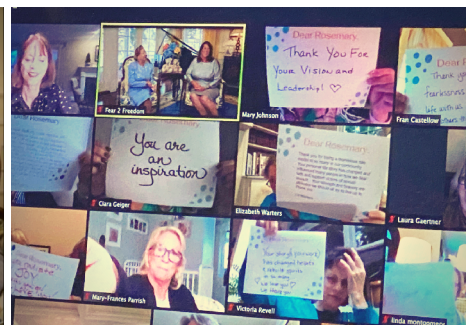
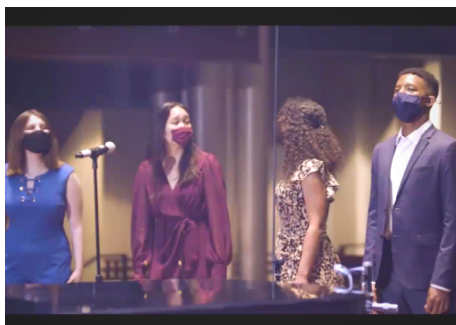
Tricia Russell

VIRTUAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! To all who attended our first of 3 Anniversary events on May 20th. We had a wonderful time and Rosemary was thrilled with all the accolades and toasts. We actually managed to surprise her several times!

Additionally, we are now more than halfway to our goal for all 3 events. The money we raise from this series of celebrations will be used to help fund our F2F AfterCare and iCare Kits as well as our prevention education programs.

If you missed the virtual event, don't worry as we have 2 more incredible events planned to celebrate and honor Fear 2 Freedom and Rosemary Triple! (check out the back of our newsletter or go online to www.fear2freedom.org/gala)



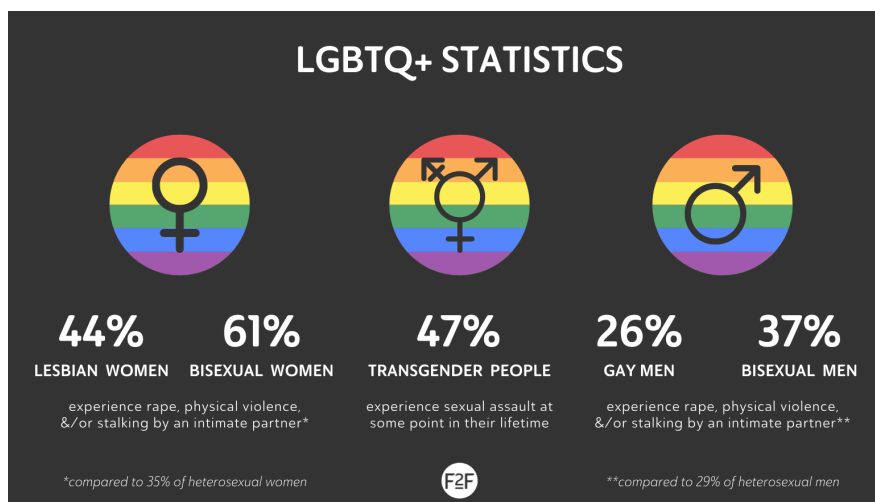
Fear 2 Freedom, Inc.

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HIGHLIGHTING LGBTQ+ SURVIVORS THIS PRIDE MONTH

Recognizing the issue

While navigating the aftermath of sexual violence and working to start a difficult healing journey, the last thing you need is for more challenges to be added to your plate. For LGBTQ+ survivors of SV, this is their reality. Unfortunately this reality is a common one as the rates of sexual victimization are higher in this community. For those who are also part of other marginalized groups these statistics are even higher.



Understanding the unique factors

Recognizing the prevalence of sexual violence experienced by LGBTQ+ survivors can be eye-opening but to better understand the scope of this issue, we must also understand the factors behind these statistics. The LGBTQ+ community is made vulnerable by harmful narratives in our society that cast disapproval, view them as deviant, and see them as less worthy of protection and compassion. These biases & discrimination factor into the higher rates of job insecurity, housing insecurity, poverty, and mental health struggles also experienced this community. Facing this stigma can lead to feelings of low self-esteem, isolation, and being forced into secrecy. Not only do these factors make the LGBTQ+ community more vulnerable to victimization but they also present unique barriers to seeking support as a survivor. Deciding whether or not to disclose incidents of SV or reach out for help is a very complicated process when facing barriers such as:

- Being threatened to be "outed" to your family, friends, work, or religious community if you disclose the assault
- Someone withholding your HIV or hormone medications if you tell anyone what happened
- Feeling conflicted about affirming harmful stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people by coming forward
- Risking receiving harmful responses from service providers and law enforcement or being denied services entirely
- Getting incorrectly blamed for the incident because of your sexuality or gender identity
- Internalizing trans/homophobic messages that pressure you to believe you should be grateful anyone was interested in you in a sexual way at all

SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ SURVIVORS

LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence need the same support as other survivors, however their unique responses are shaped by the experiences of their community.

EDUCATE	RESPECT	RESPOND
Yourselves on the systemic & historical oppression faced by the LGBTQ+ community.	Their identity by using their preferred name, pronouns, & relationship labels.	With acceptance, validation, & belief to whatever they choose to share with you.
Yourselves on recognizing & dispelling harmful myths/stereotypes perpetuated about the LGBTQ+ community.	Their right to privacy. Allow them to share as much or as little as they'd like & keep it confidential.	With information on where they can access LGBTQ+ friendly & culturally relevant support services.

Taking supportive action

Often times when LGBTQ+ people, as well as people in other marginalized groups, share their experiences with oppression, and how it impacts their experiences as survivors, they're dismissed, belittled, or even blamed. Not meeting the entirety of survivors' experiences and identities with openness and compassion, can be retraumatizing, alienating, and prevent survivors from accessing the support they need. When we devalue and disrespect others, we allow violence to thrive. By working to understand how oppression affects the experiences of LGBTQ+ survivors we're able to provide more compassionate responses and do all we can to end *all forms* of violence.



GIVE LOCAL 757

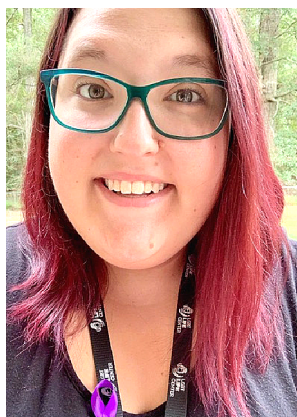
On May 11th, in celebration of Give Local 757, we partnered with Lifehouse Church for a very special service-learning day. Our hybrid volunteer event began with a virtual Hour 2 Empower program on trauma-informed support. Congregation members learned tools and resources to help them better support trauma survivors in their community who turn to them for help. Directly after the virtual training, 7 church member volunteers headed to F2F's warehouse to assemble 100 AfterCare Kits for our forensic nurse partners at Riverside Hospital.

Once all the kits were fully assembled, Beth Walters and Brandy Kelley from Riverside joined us to pick up their F2F Kits and meet the amazing volunteers who assembled them. Beth thanked our volunteers while sharing that she can't express enough how much F2F Kits do for the people who receive them. Beth's moving words reminded us why we came together for #GiveLocal757 - To make a positive impact in the lives of others.

Lifehouse Church not only made an impact with their volunteer service, they also made a generous contribution of \$3,500 that was matched dollar for dollar to Fear 2 Freedom! Thank you Lifehouse Church, Newport News!



COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Rebecca Rose, (she/her)
rrose@lgbtlifecenter.org
757-640-0929 ext. 216

F2F strives to build connections with a wide array of agencies who work to meet all types of survivors where they're at to offer them relevant support services. One such partnership we're proud to spotlight is with The LGBT Life Center.

The LGBT Life Center located in Norfolk, VA was established in 1989. Their mission is to empower LGBTQ & HIV communities through partnerships. The impacts of their far reaching programs are felt throughout Hampton Roads.

Rebecca Rose, Crisis Counselor with the center, shared with us that the LGBTQ+ community requires more support from its communities. With a higher vulnerability to acts of sexual assault and greater barriers due to social stigmas, fears of bias, hostility, and judgement, it is critical to raise awareness and engage in open communication to better education and serve LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence.

Want to learn how you can be an ally for LGBTQ+ survivors? Join Fear 2 Freedom's Facebook Live on June 24th to hear more about the LGBT Life Center, meet Rebecca, and find out how you can empower others, and yourself, to #BeTheChange.

"Often times, LGBT survivors (especially youth) have been isolated from their families and communities due to their identities, so they may not know what places are safe for them to reach out for help and/or they may fear further rejection and unacceptance."

- Rebecca Rose, Crisis Counselor, LGBT Life Center



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



This month we are proud to spotlight the dedicated, hard working volunteer force on our 10th Anniversary Gala Committee. **THANK YOU Claire, Jennifer, Liz, Amie, Carol, Brittney, Martha, Chrissy, Susan, Samantha, Angela, Holly, Carrie, Robyn, Linda, Kayleigh, Janet, & Courtney!** From prepping for our May virtual event to planning event details of our upcoming outdoor wine event & 2022 Gala celebration, this team of volunteers have come together to honor Rosemary and F2F's 10th anniversary!

SAVE THE DATES

Friday, October 22 at 5:30pm

Join us for a fabulous evening at the Williamsburg Winery with a guided wine tasting by the winemaker and the owner of the winery, with delicious food pairings to go with the wines. Stay tuned for more details and the ticket link.

March 19, 2022 at 6:00pm

We will wrap up our Celebrations at the Ferguson Center for the Arts on CNU's campus with our spectacular Gala Celebration with special musical guest Morgan James. Join us in celebrating 10 years of supporting survivors of sexual assault and educating students to combat sexual violence. 2021 also marks ten years of vision, leadership, and compassion from Rosemary Tribble, so each event will honor her courage and thank her for all she has given to F2F and countless survivors over the years.

